

## BUREAU OF INTELLIGENCE AND RESEARCH - ANALYSIS - NOVEMBER 6, 1983

1. IRAN/IRAQ: SADDAM HUSSEIN TO EXPAND WAR SOON?

Iraqi President Saddam Hussein may be under more immediate pressure to expand the war than we previously anticipated. We have assumed that Saddam's decision to use the Etendards/Exocet combination would be largely a function of how he views his long-term economic prospects. However, in the wake of Iranian advances in Kurdistan and shake-ups in Iraq's intelligence organization, Saddam may now believe that he must take some dramatic action sooner rather than later.

There are three key variables which will most directly influence whether and/or when Saddam would decide to use the Etendards: the military situation along the border, Saddam's sense of personal/political security, and the state of Iraqi finances. The military and security factors had been relatively static over an extended period of time. The war had been stalemated for months and Saddam was not faced with any serious security threats--in large part because of the vigilance of the Iraqi secret police. Thus, the progressive deterioration of Iraqi finances seemed to emerge as the major variable influencing the decision about whether, how, and when to expand the war in the Gulf.

Recent developments may have moved Saddam to reevaluate the weight given to the military/security variables:

- The Iraqis have not been able to stop, let alone reverse, the Iranian military advances in Kurdistan. Although a major Iranian military breakthrough in Kurdistan or elsewhere along the front is likely, continuing military gains are having a cumulative impact on Saddam. This could lead him to take some desperate action if more of them were to occur in the future; and
- Following what appears to be a bitter family feud, Saddam has dismissed his half brother as head of Iraq's intelligence state security apparatus and apparently is purging that institution.

We do not know whether these two factors are sufficient to tip the balance in favor of early use of the Etendards. However, Saddam clearly is concerned about events in Kurdistan, and there are indications that Iraq may be prepared to strike back at Iran at times and places of its choosing. Iraqi First Deputy Prime Minister Ramadan was dispatched to selected Gulf states last week with this message

25X1

TOP SECRET UMBRA